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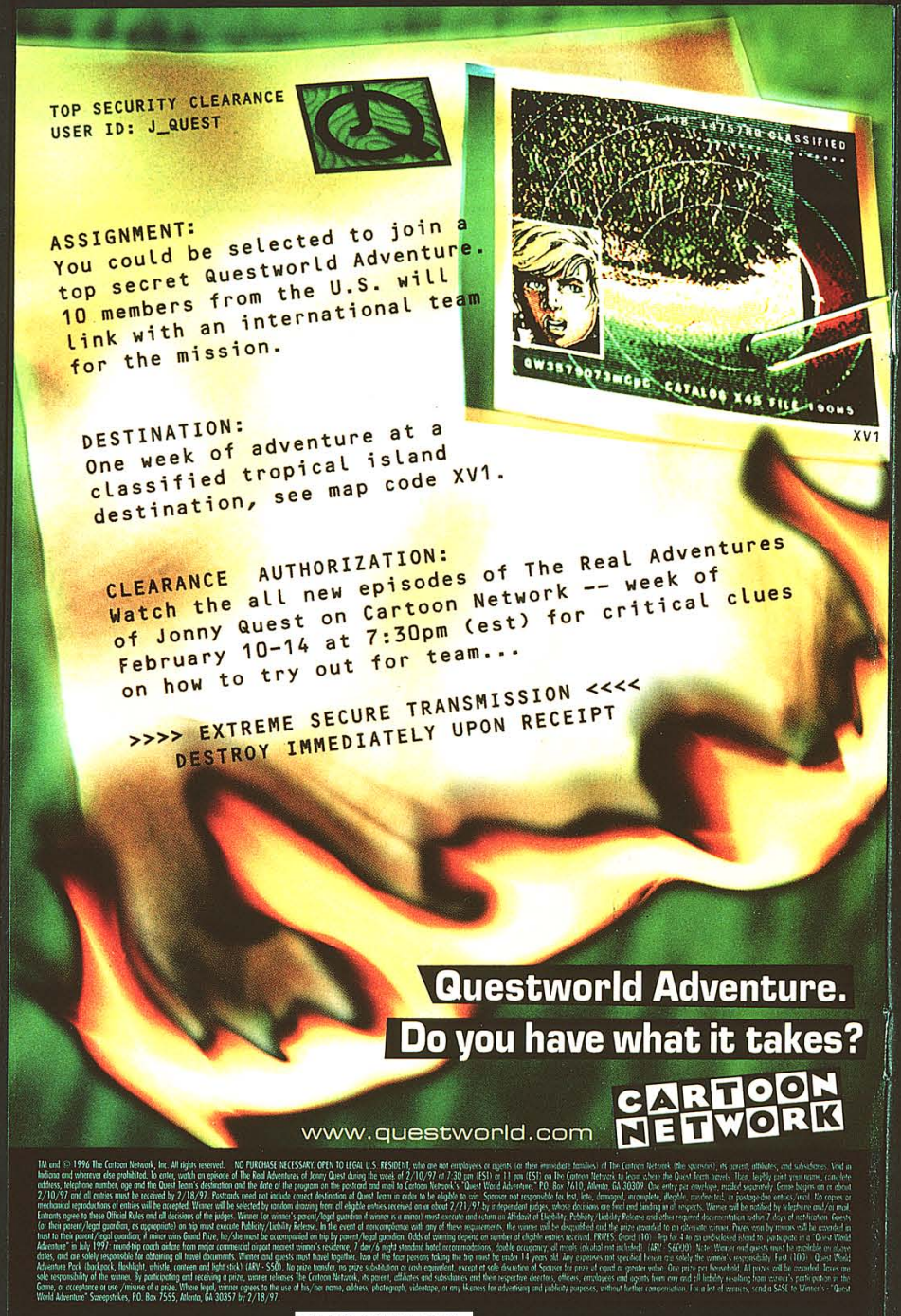

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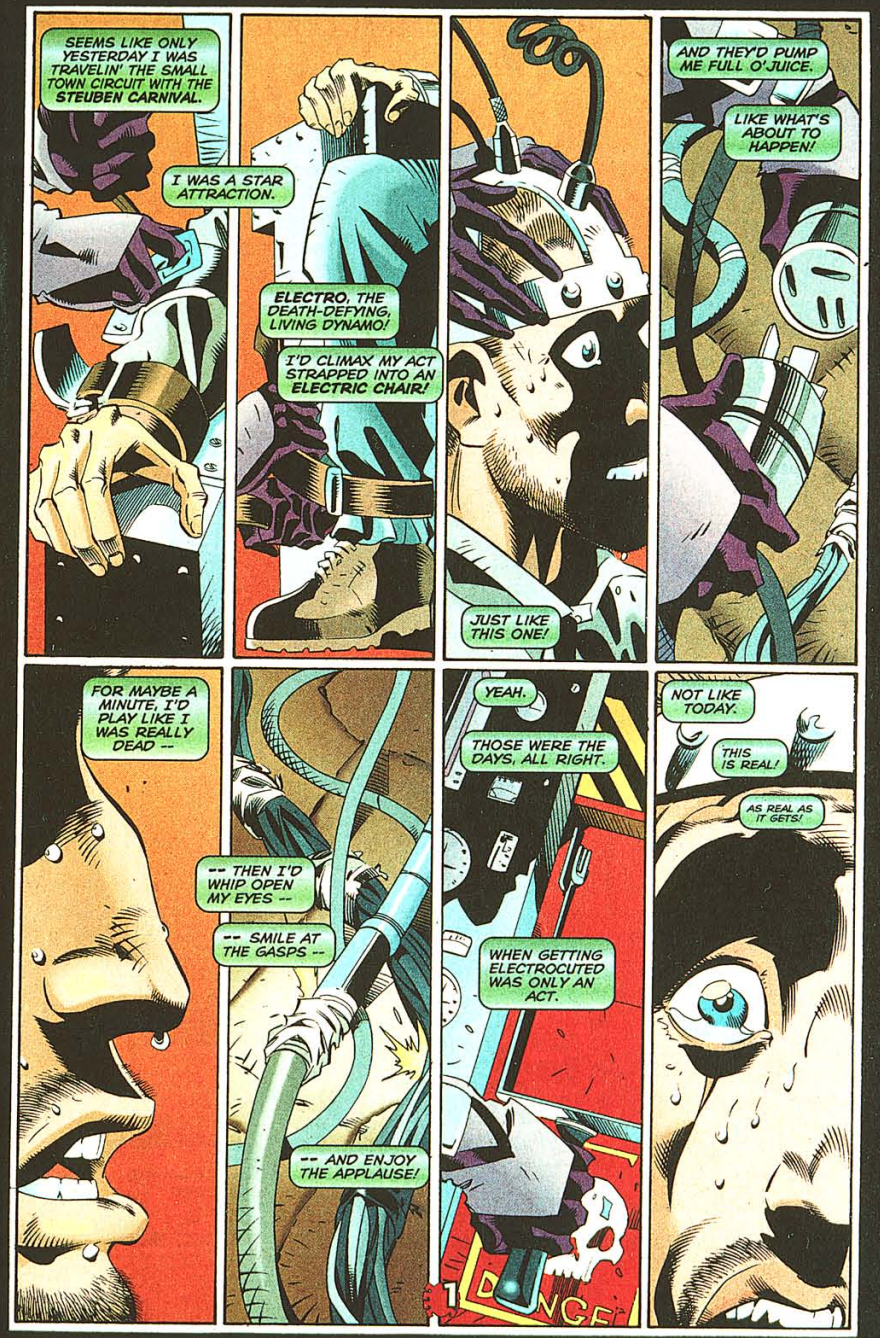

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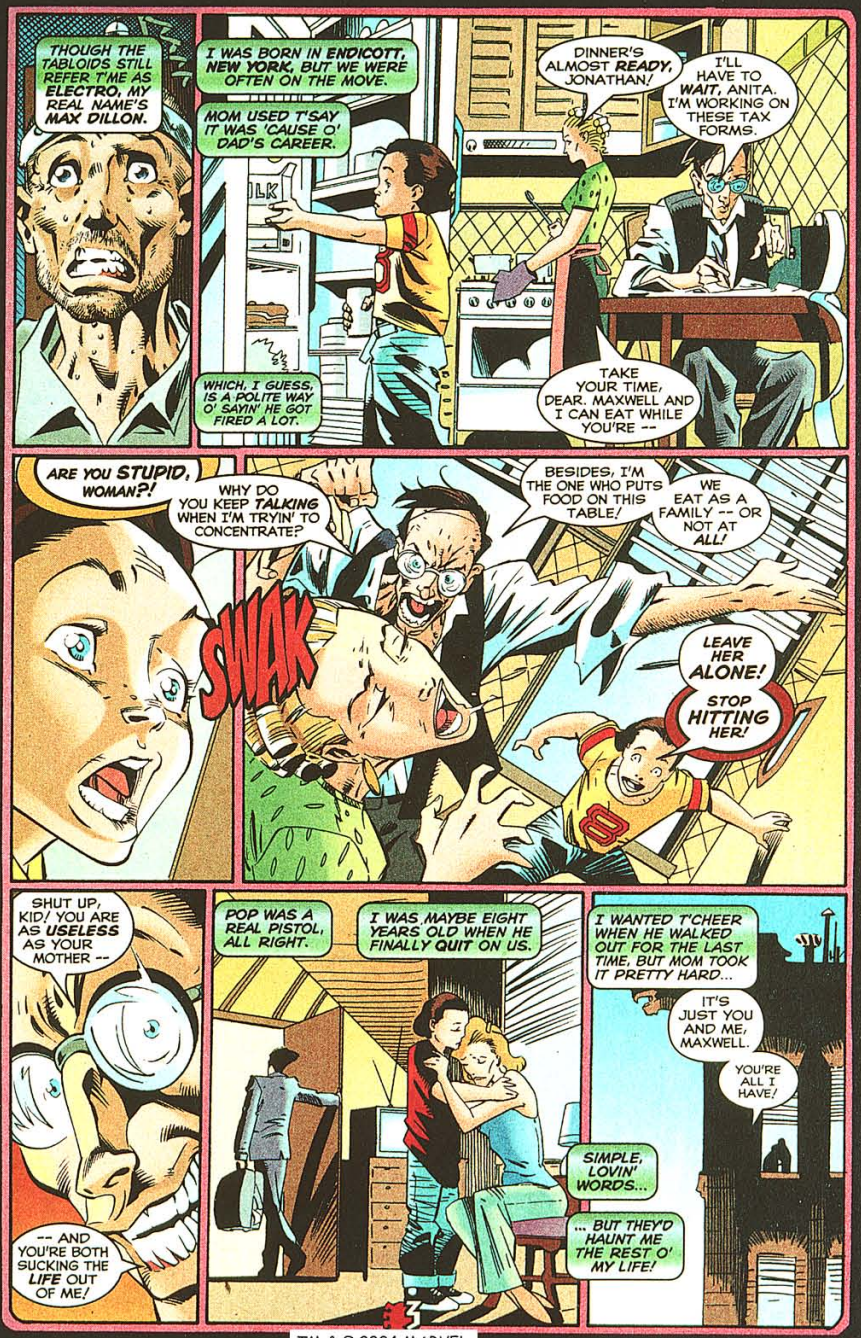

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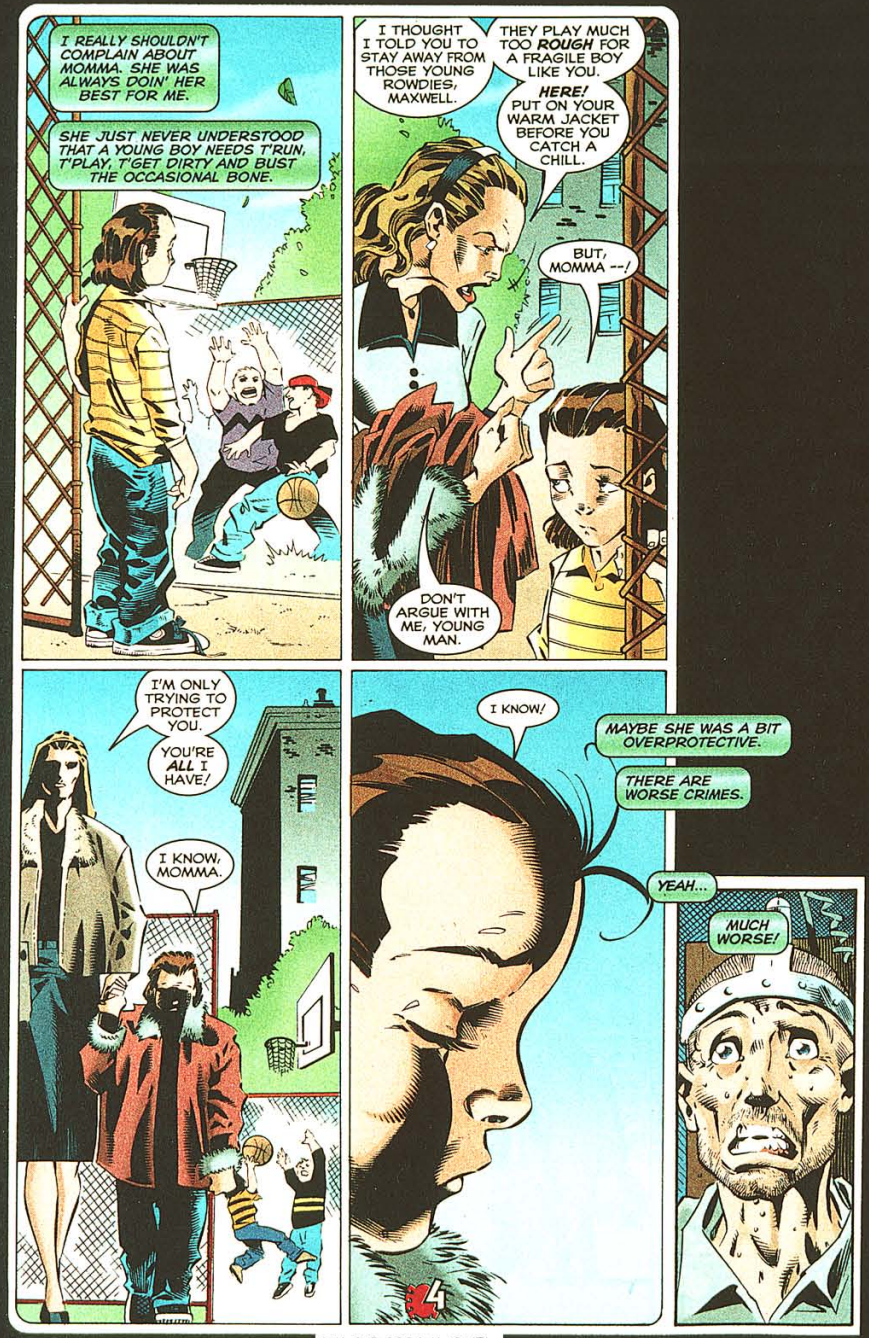

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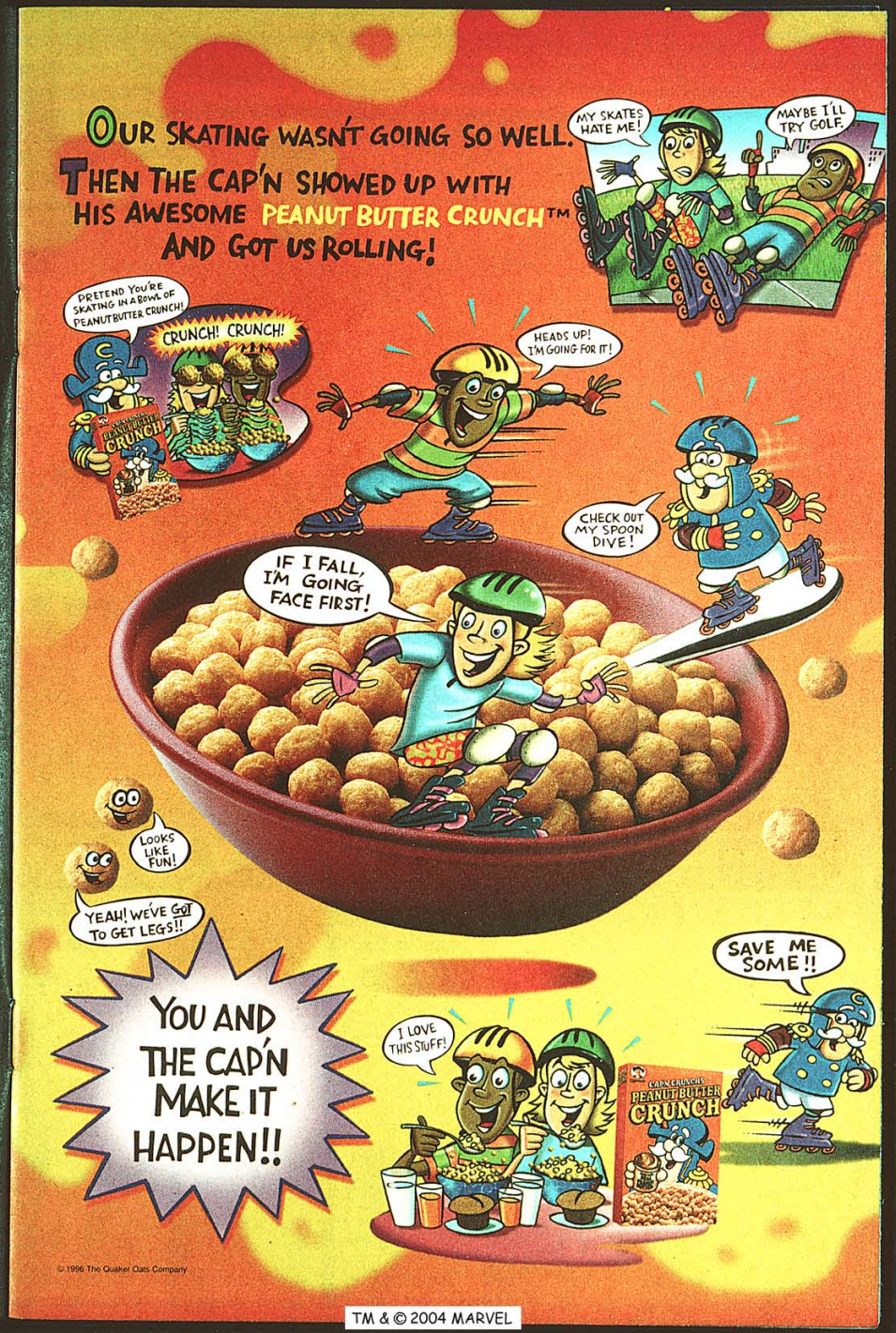

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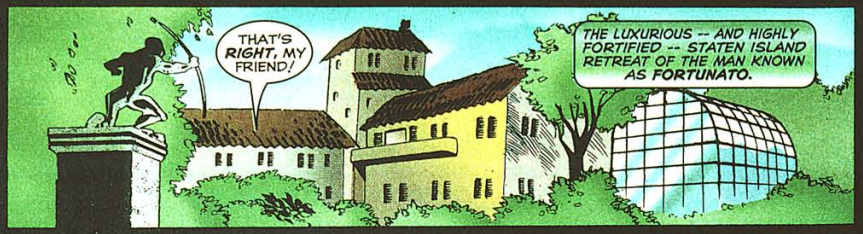

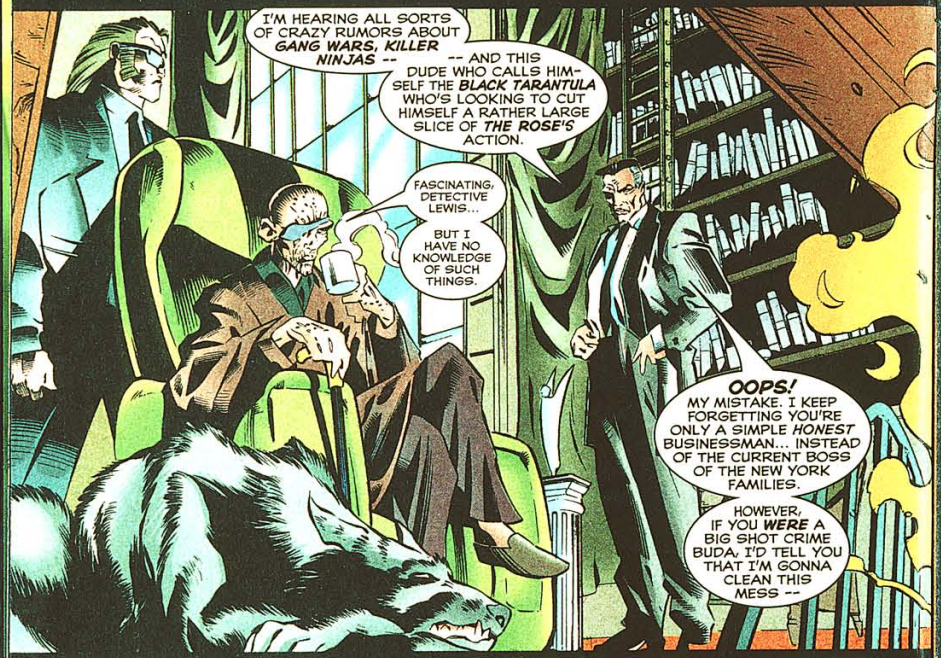

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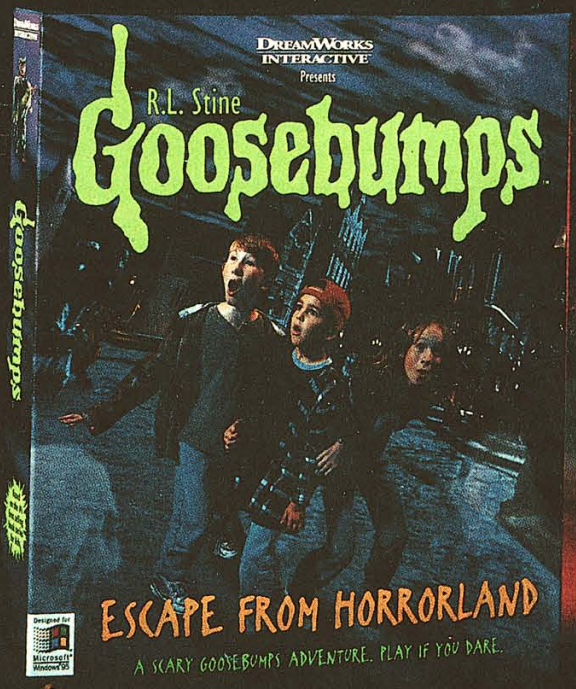

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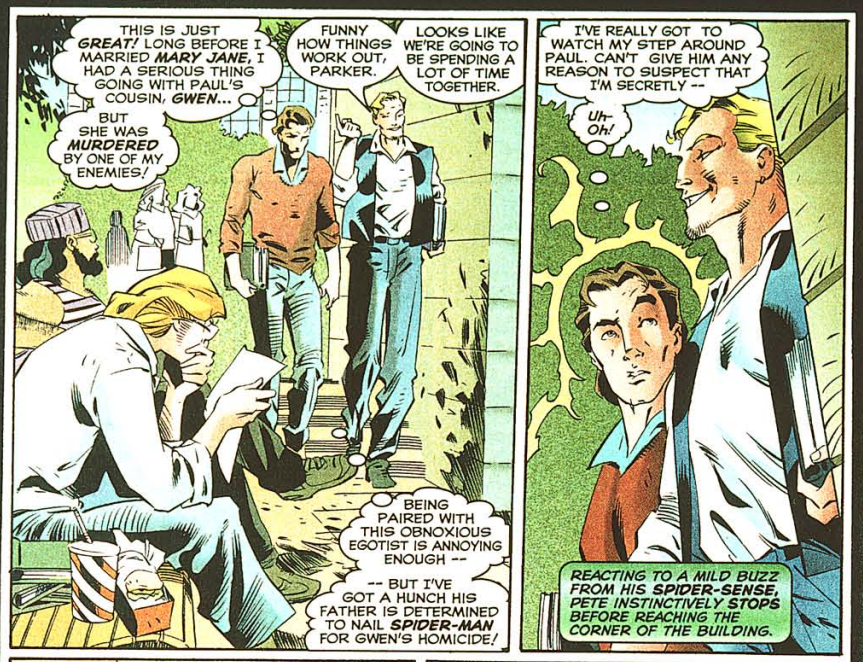

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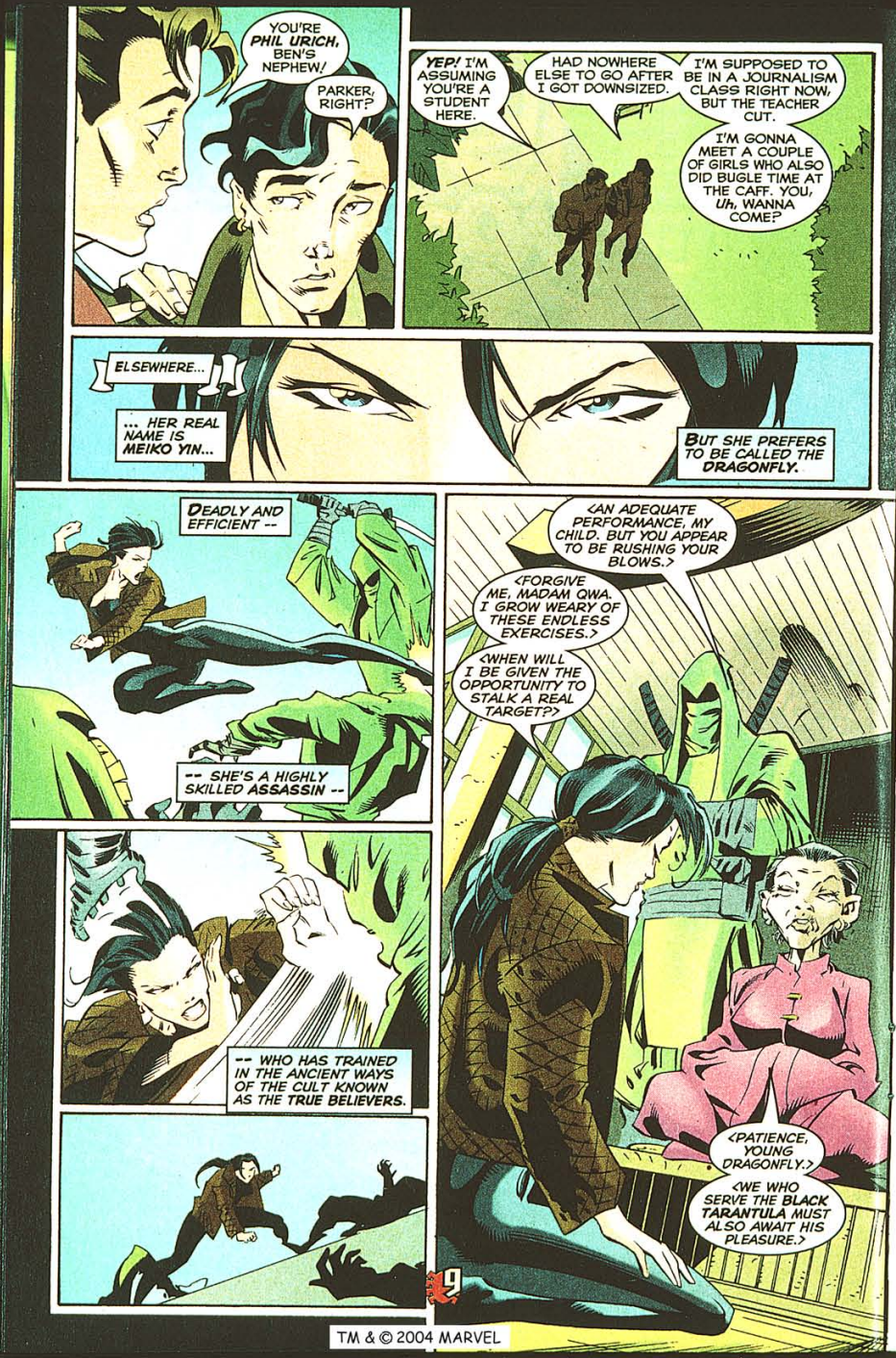

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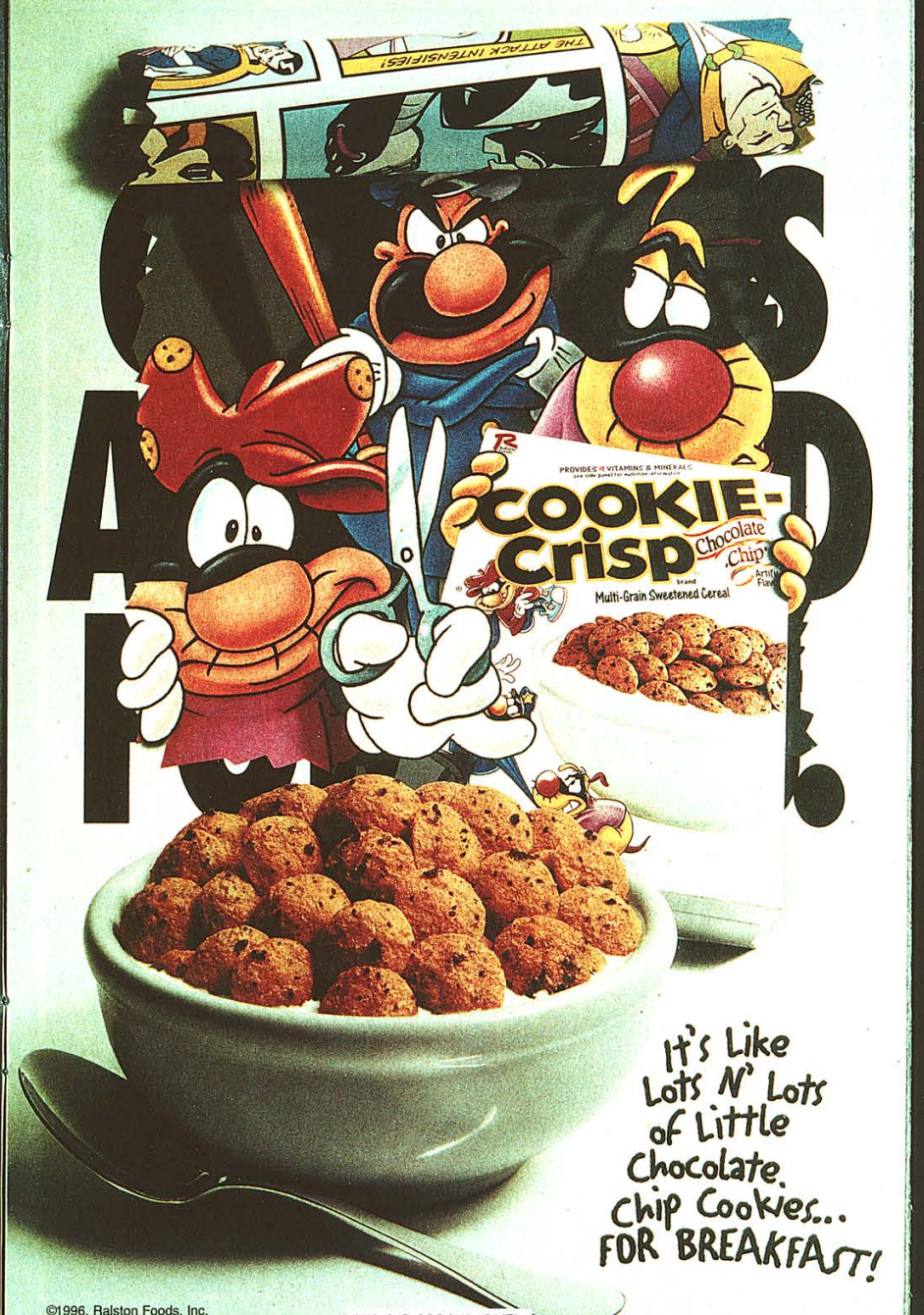

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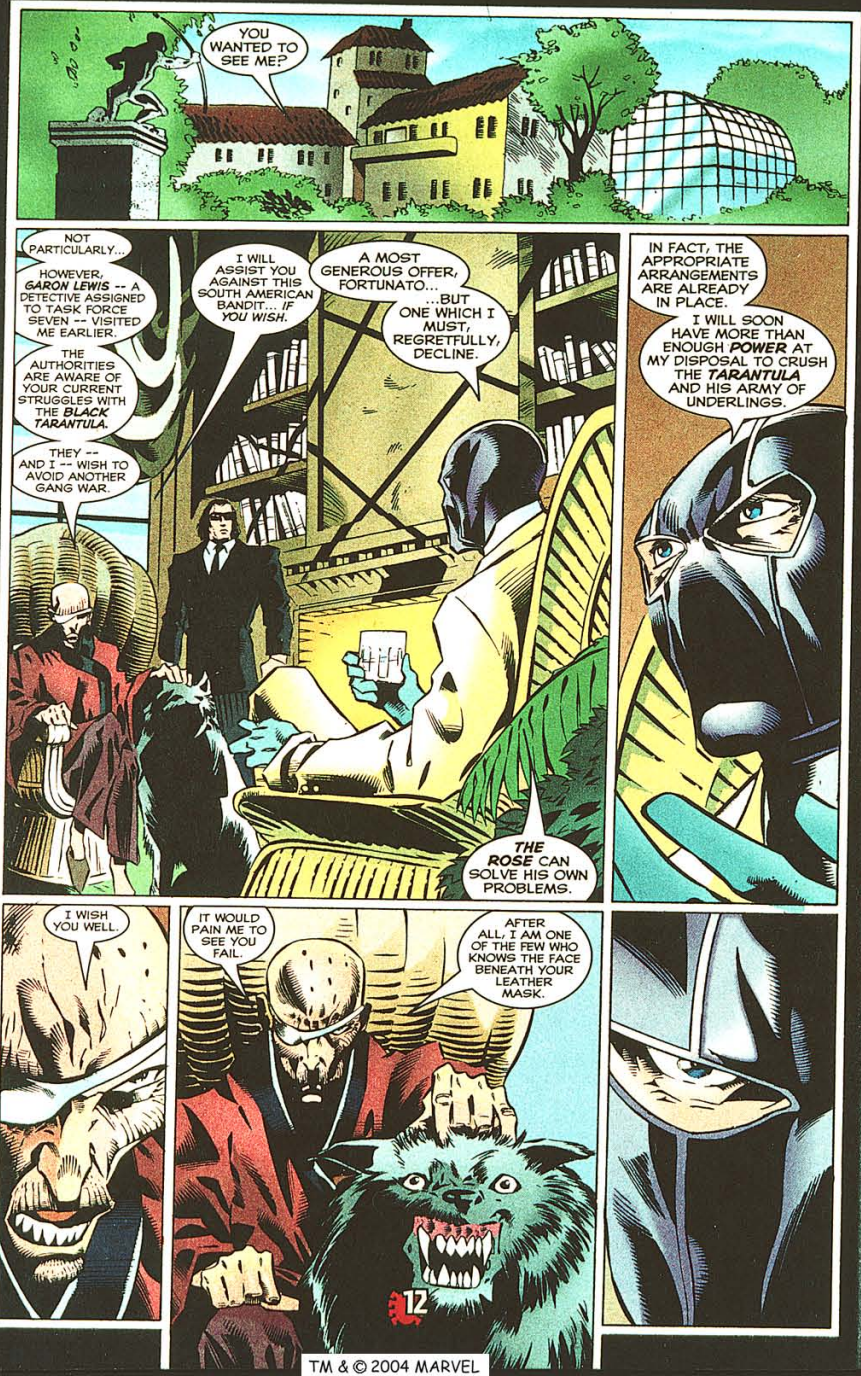

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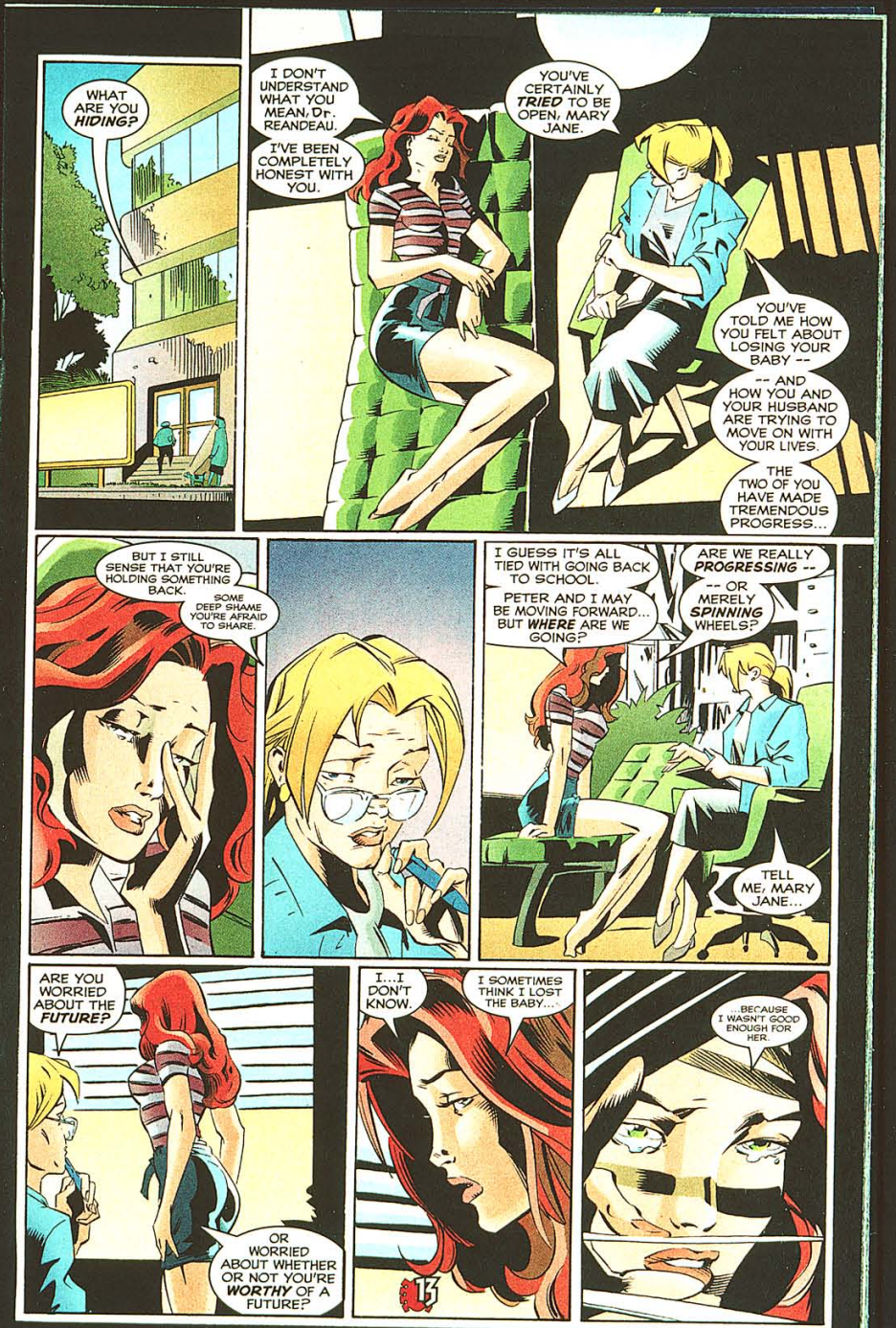

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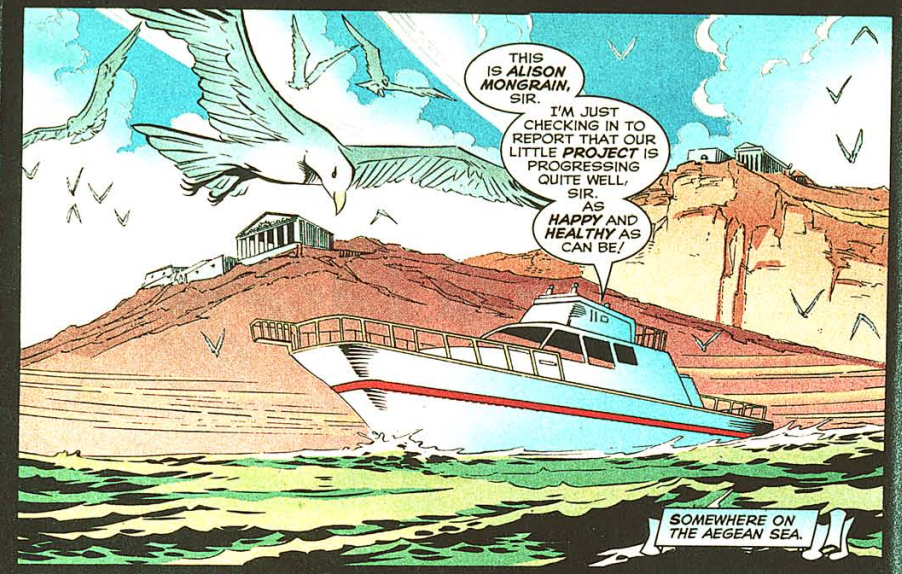

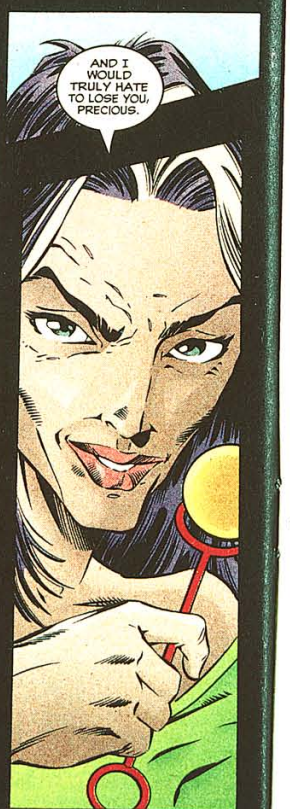

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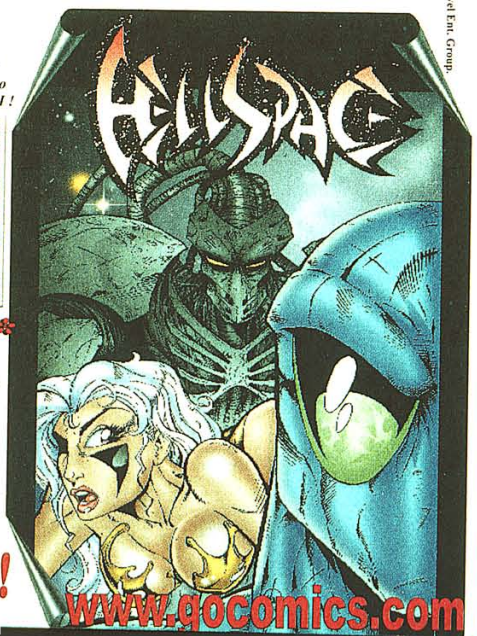

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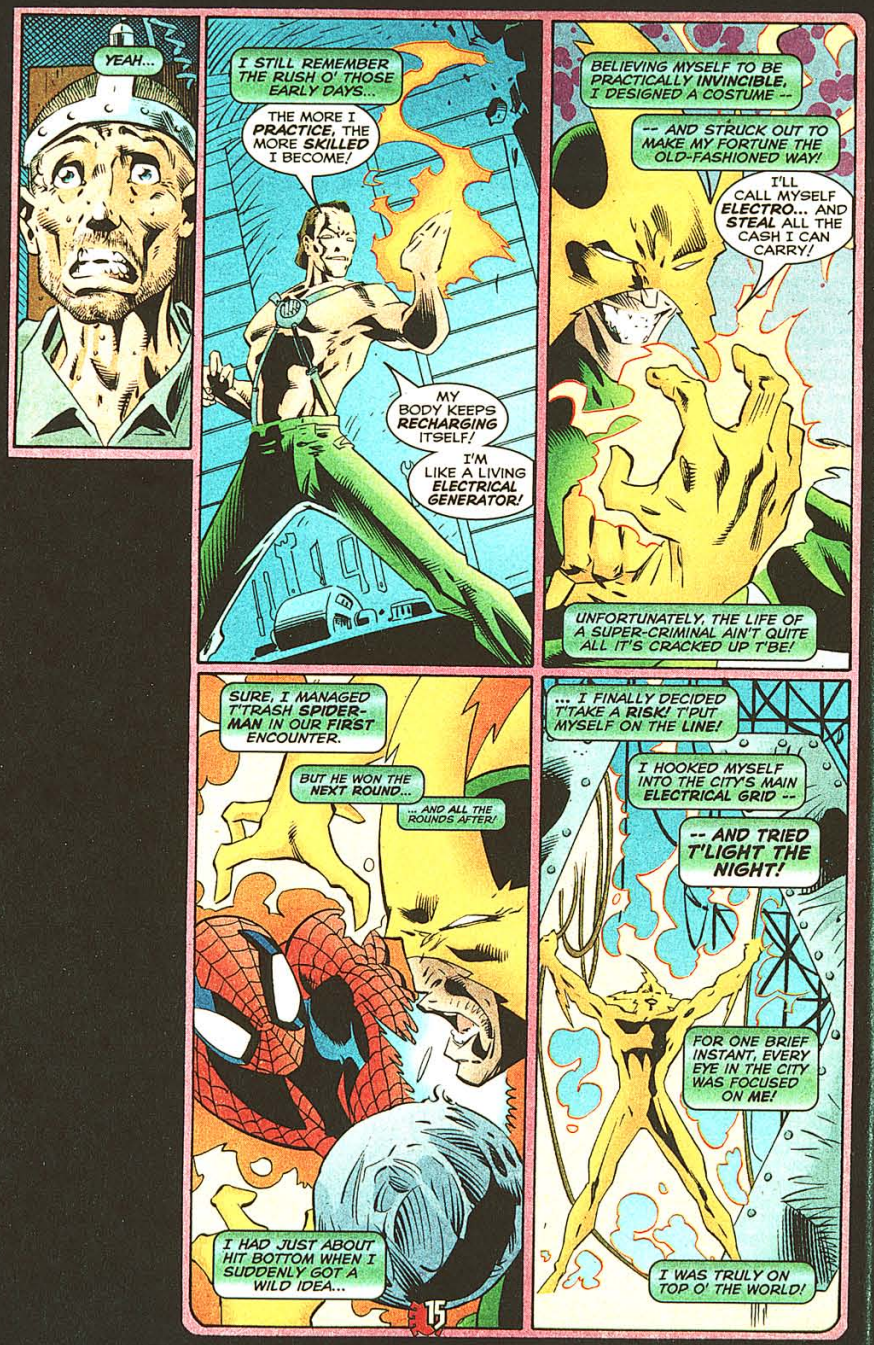

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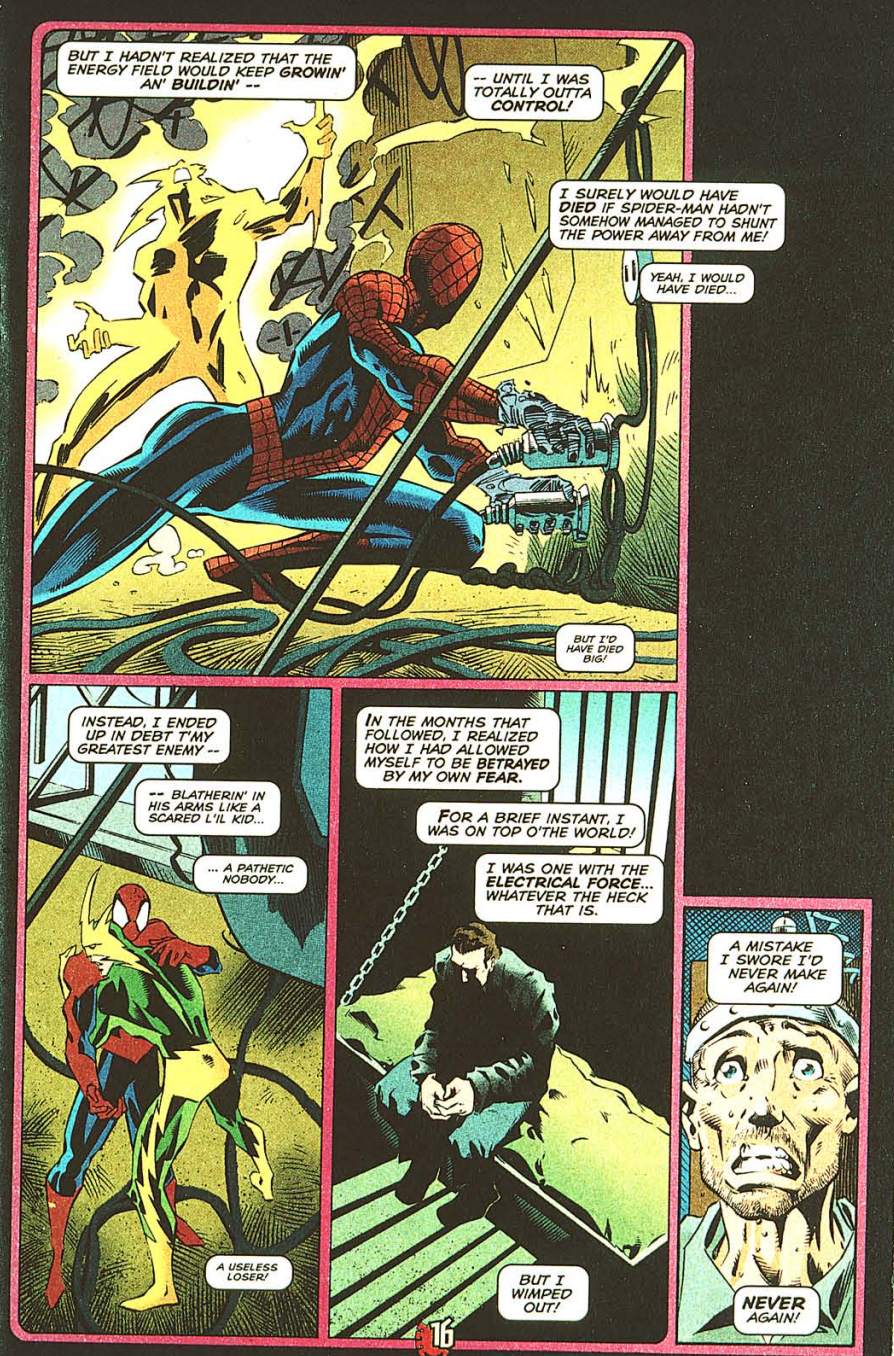

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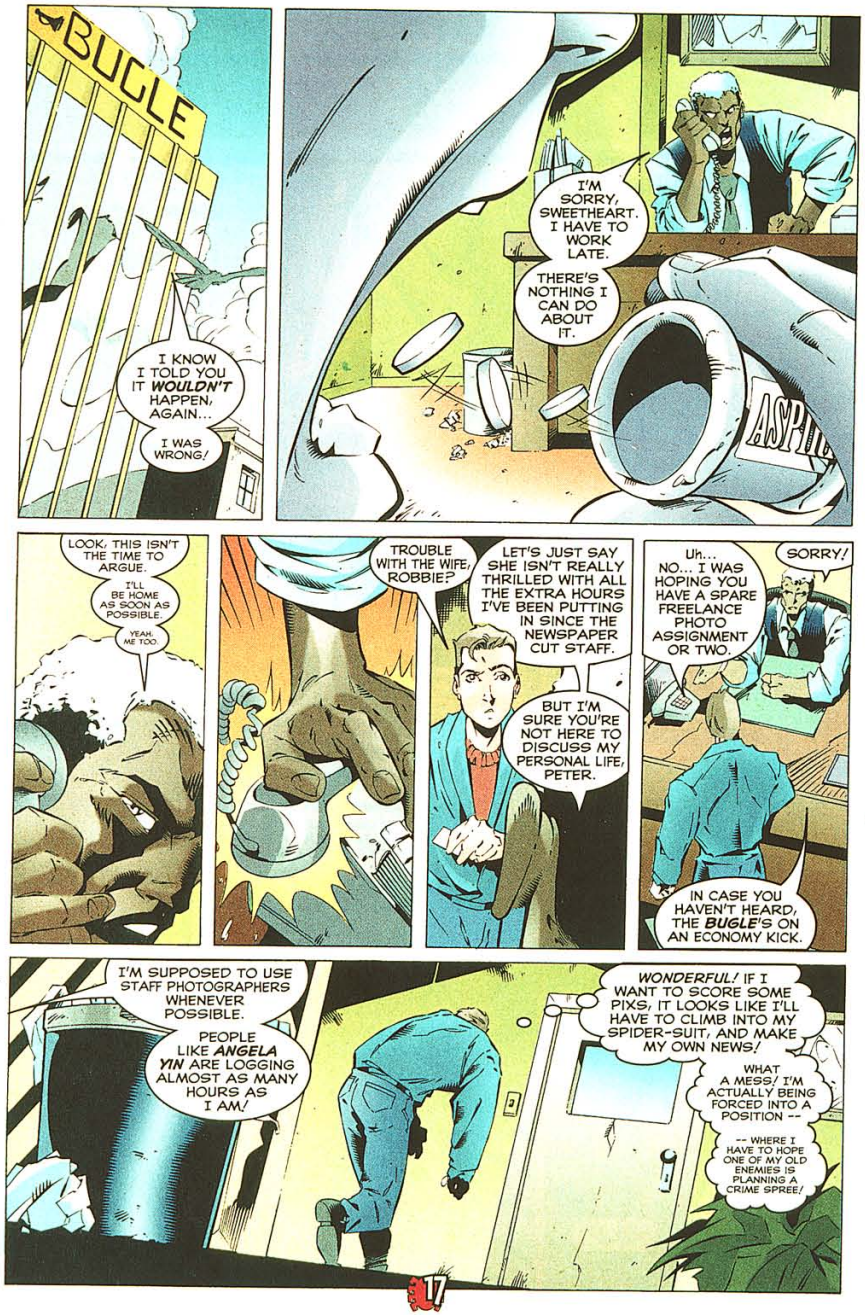

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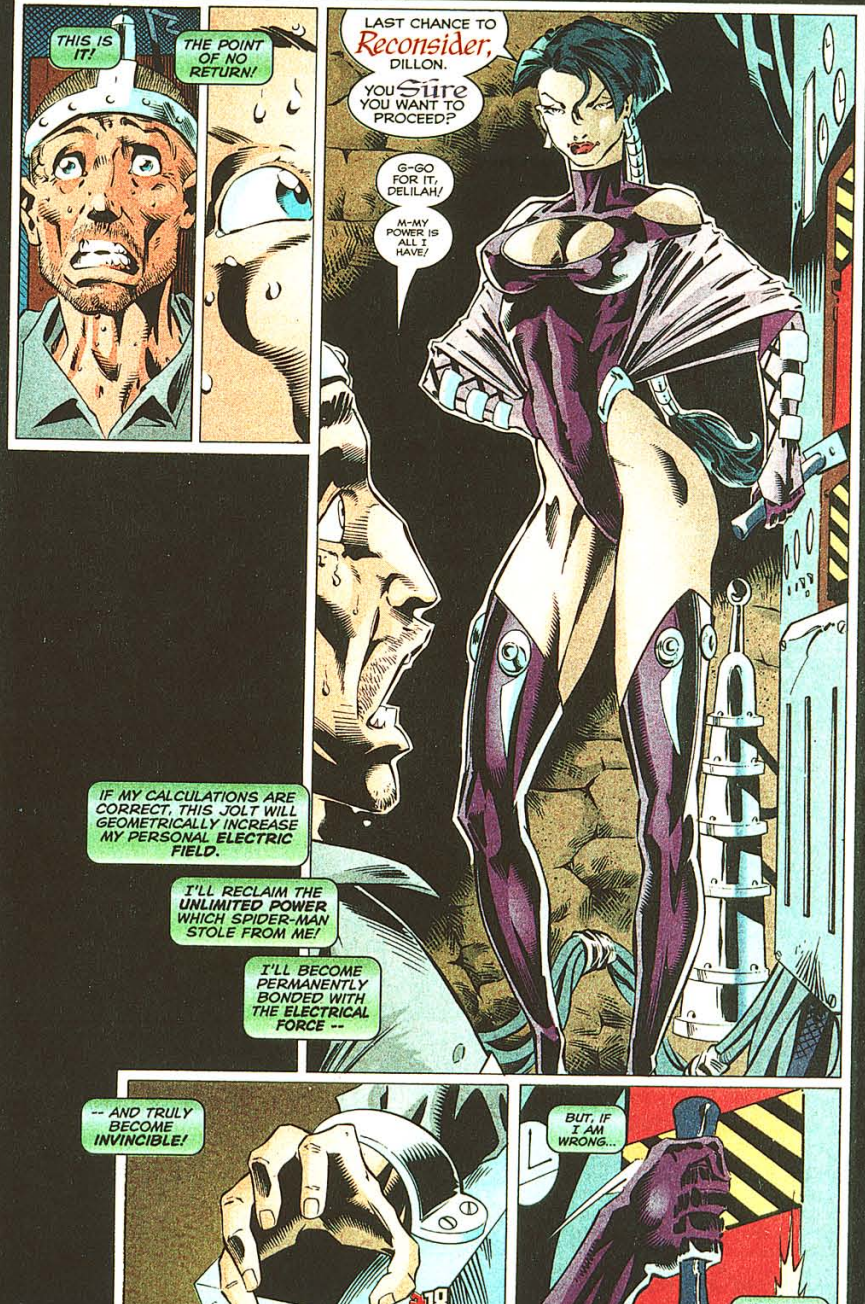

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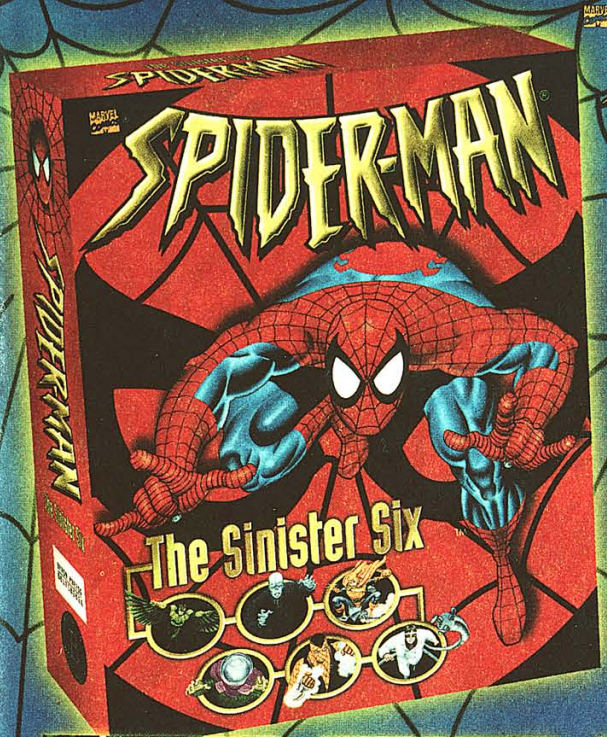

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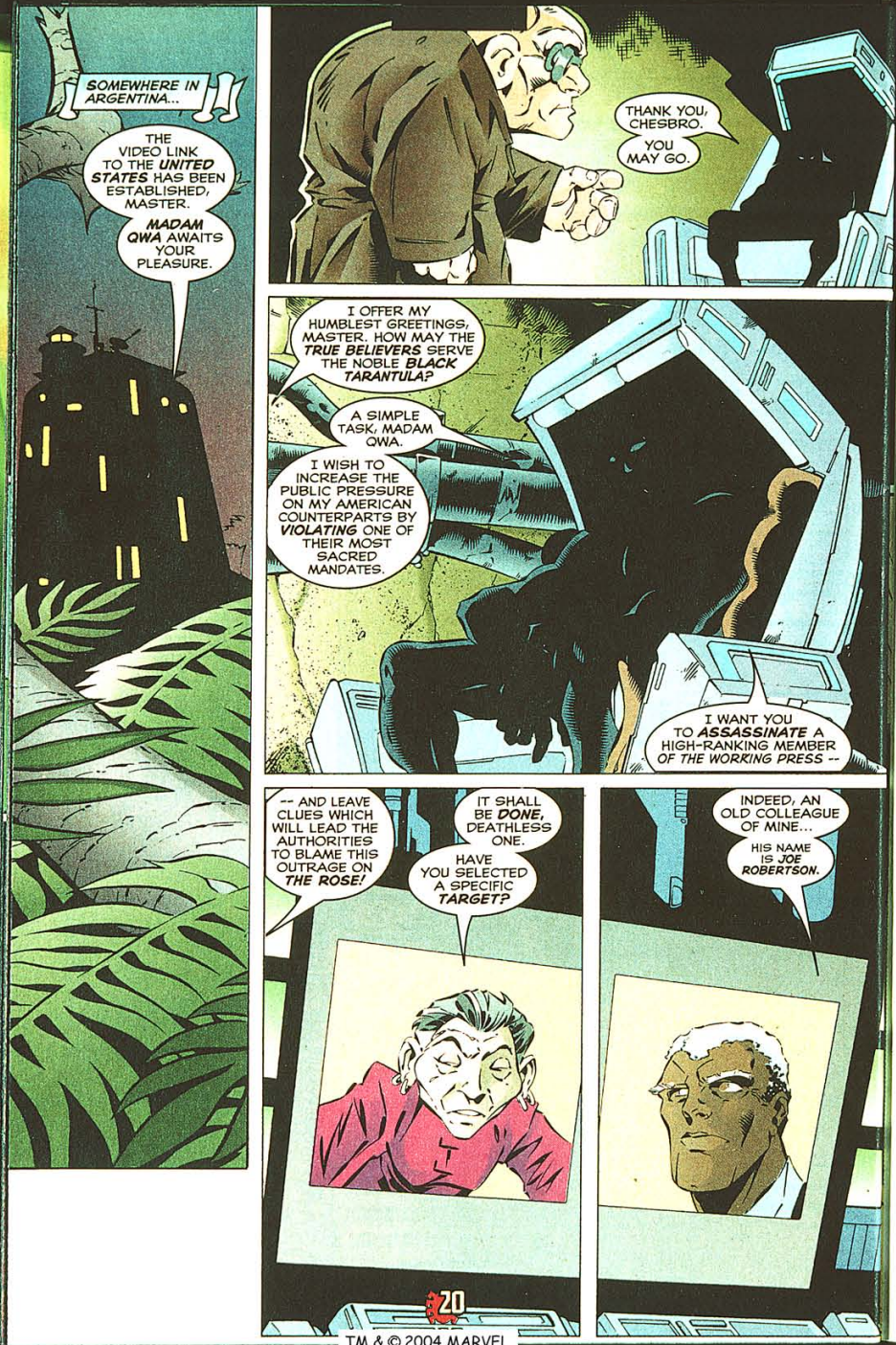

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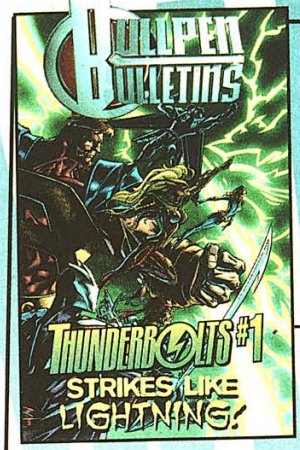

Not since the introduction of the *Fantastic Four* has such a groundbreaking team book been unleashed upon an unsuspecting public! A brand-new group of super heroes bursts upon the world in a blazing new series next week when the *Thunderbolts* appear to defend the helpless Earth in the aftermath of *Onslaught!* All eyes are upon them as they take on first the *Rat Pack* and then the deadly *Wrecking Crew* in THUNDERBOLTS #1, and it isn't long before this gang of super-charged good Samaritans rapidly become the idols of a hero-starved world!

The Thunderbolts are a formidable and colorful group, with powers as diverse as their appearances! There's the mysterious leader, *Citizen V*, the sound-bending vixen *Songbird*, the dive-bombing *MACH-1*, the fiery *Meteorite*, the larger-than-life *Atlas*, and the fully-wired *Techno!*

Created by *Kurt Busiek*, the man who brought you the acclaimed MARVELS and can be found every month over in our ever-popular UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN series, THUNDERBOLTS also features the awesome art of *Mark Bagley*, late of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN! This series is the one to watch in '97, and offers one of the most original, most action-packed storylines in the Marvel Universe!

EDITORIAL PROFILE: BOBBIE CHASE
ON PAROLE AND IN PRINT!

WHAT SHE EDITS: INCREDIBLE HULK, ELEKTRA, STAR TREK: STARFLEET ACADEMY, STAR TREK: EARLY VOYAGES

WHERE SHE'S FROM: Fishkill, NY. Recently, some irate animal-lovers wrote to the mayor asking that the name of the town be changed.

WHERE SHE'S GOING: Downhill. *Real* fast.

FIRST JOB: Right out of college, my first job was working as a receptionist and fit model for Bill Blass.

WORST JOB: That *was* my worst job! Except, of course, for making ice cream sundaes and slapping mayo on sandwiches at the college snack bar. Now I hate mayonnaise.

HOW SHE GOT INTO COMICS: I answered an ad in the *New York Times*. It didn't say anything about Marvel, though. It said " Assistant editor needed for monthly graphic publication. No typing." I thought to myself, "Great! I can't type!"

WHY SHE LOVES COMICS SO DANG MUCH: Because I have a really swell time putting the lettering in the little balloons, and I like coloring and stapling the pages together.

RECENT BRUSH WITH FAME: I went to visit the Paramount studios, and my jaw dropped when I got a load of Avery Brooks (Captain Sisko on *Deep Space Nine*). What a handsome man! Then my other jaw dropped when I saw his stand-in! I also got to meet Nana Visitor (Kira on *DS9*) and Kate Mulgrew (of *Voyager*). Kate Mulgrew is much prettier in real life than she is on the show!

SOMETHING YOU ONCE DID OF WHICH YOU ARE TERRIBLY ASHAMED: Oh, that six-month stint in prison, I guess. It's great that Marvel has such a tax hiring policy!.

Watch your back, true believer, 'cuz SPIDER-MAN: DEAD MAN'S HAND is reaching for the comic book racks in a mere seven days! There's 48 pages in this barn-burner of a one-shot, and it only takes three of 'em for the evil and thoroughly rotted *Carrion* to dig his way out from six feet under and go after *Spidey* like *Bob Harras* goes after an unattended cup of coffee! Yep, this blockbuster stand-alone issue will outline in gory detail the return of Carrion, revamped for more guts and even less glory!

"Carrion's status at the end of the clone storyline left a lot of questions that will be answered once and for all in this book," says editor *Tom Brevoort*. The walking carcass is looking to become a major player in Spider-Man's life this year, and this issue is sort of like his spring training!

SPIDER-MAN: DEAD MAN'S HAND is written by legendary Spidey writer *Roger Stern* - "You know," says Tom, "the genius behind SPIDER-MAN: HOBGOBLIN LIVES!" *Darick Robertson*, a man whose pencil has done raw justice to every character from *Gambit* to *Howard the Duck*, will be penciling the book, with an assist by Dandy *Dan Lawlis*, who recently helped to bring *Starlord* back in spectacular fashion! As for Carrion, well, if Spidey doesn't watch his back, it looks like he may be running the show!

CHECKLIST FOR FEBRUARY 19

HULK #452 The *Hulk's* got his own island now, and he's not giving it up to the U.S. Army or some puny hurricane! By *Peter David* and *Mike Deodato, Jr.*!

IRON MAN #6 *Iron Man* can't decide whether to join the *Avengers*, or rip them apart limb from limb! Wonder what the *Hulk's* gonna have to say about that! By *Jim Lee*, *Scott Lobdell*, and *Whilce Portacio*!

PUNISHER #18 *Frank Castle's* lost his memory, but hopefully he'll retain control of his marbles as the government closes in on the church where he's hiding! By *John Ostrander* and *Tom Lyle*!

THUNDERBOLTS #1 The explosive emergence of a hot new team of super heroes... who harbor between them a super-sized secret! Special double-sized debut issue rocks with action and intrigue! By *Kurt Busiek* and *Mark Bagley*!

PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN #79 Is *Spidey* going after his last fly as he attempts to determine the role of *HYDRA* in organized crime? By *Howard Mackie* and *John Romita, Jr.*!

SPIDER-MAN: DEAD MAN'S HAND This blisterin' 48-page special finds the evil *Carrion* busting out of his grave to go after the web-slinger! Betcha *Spidey'll* be able to smell *him* comin'! By *Roger Stern* and *Darick Robertson*!

EXCALIBUR #108 *Excalibur* are seeing red as the *Dragons of the Crimson Dawn* arrive on the scene! By *Ben Raab* and *Salvador Larroca*!

WHAT IF? #96 What if *Magneto's* daughter *Anya* hadn't died in the evil fire of her father's creation? Would daddy have been a nicer guy? By *Chris Wozniak*!

X-MAN #26 "Fresh" from battle, a battered *Nate* collapses on *Muir Island*, leaving *Moira MacTaggert* to attend to his wounds! Gosh, we can't think of a worse fate! By *Terry Kavanagh* and *Roger Cruz*!

X-MEN #63 *Sebastian Shaw* of the recently realigned *Inner Circle* gains an ally and sets out to kick some mutant butt! By *Scott Lobdell* and *Carlos Pacheco*!

STAR TREK: STARFLEET ACADEMY #5 *Klingons* hijack the *Omega Squad's* runabout...and *Pava's* old boyfriend is one of them! Get thee a restraining order, girl! By *Chris Cooper* and *Chris Renaud*!

MARVEL ONLINE — Available February 20 — MARVEL ONLINE

SPIDER-MAN CYBERCOMIC #32 *Spidey* and *Doc Strange* take on *Hammerhead* and the mystical amulet of *Aagara*! By *John Lewandowski*, *Nghia Lam* and *Mark Badger*!

DESIGN BY COMICRAFT

[WISH LIST]

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HOW DID THINGS GO WITH FORTUNATO?
NOT WELL!
HE OBVIOUSLY HOPES THAT I'LL FAIL AGAINST THE BLACK TARANTULA SO THAT HE HIMSELF CAN TAKE OVER MY ACTION.
ORGANIZED CRIME JUST HASN'T BEEN THE SAME SINCE THE KINGPIN WAS FORCED OUT.
THERE'S JUST NO HUMANITY IN IT, ANYMORE.
Oh, WELL! NO ONE EVER SAID BEING A CRIMELORD WOULD BE EASY!
HOW DID YOU MAKE OUT WITH DILLON?
DID HE MANAGE TO SURVIVE --
-- OR WILL WE HAVE TO SEEK ANOTHER OPTION?
PERHAPS YOU SHOULD SEE FOR YOURSELF...
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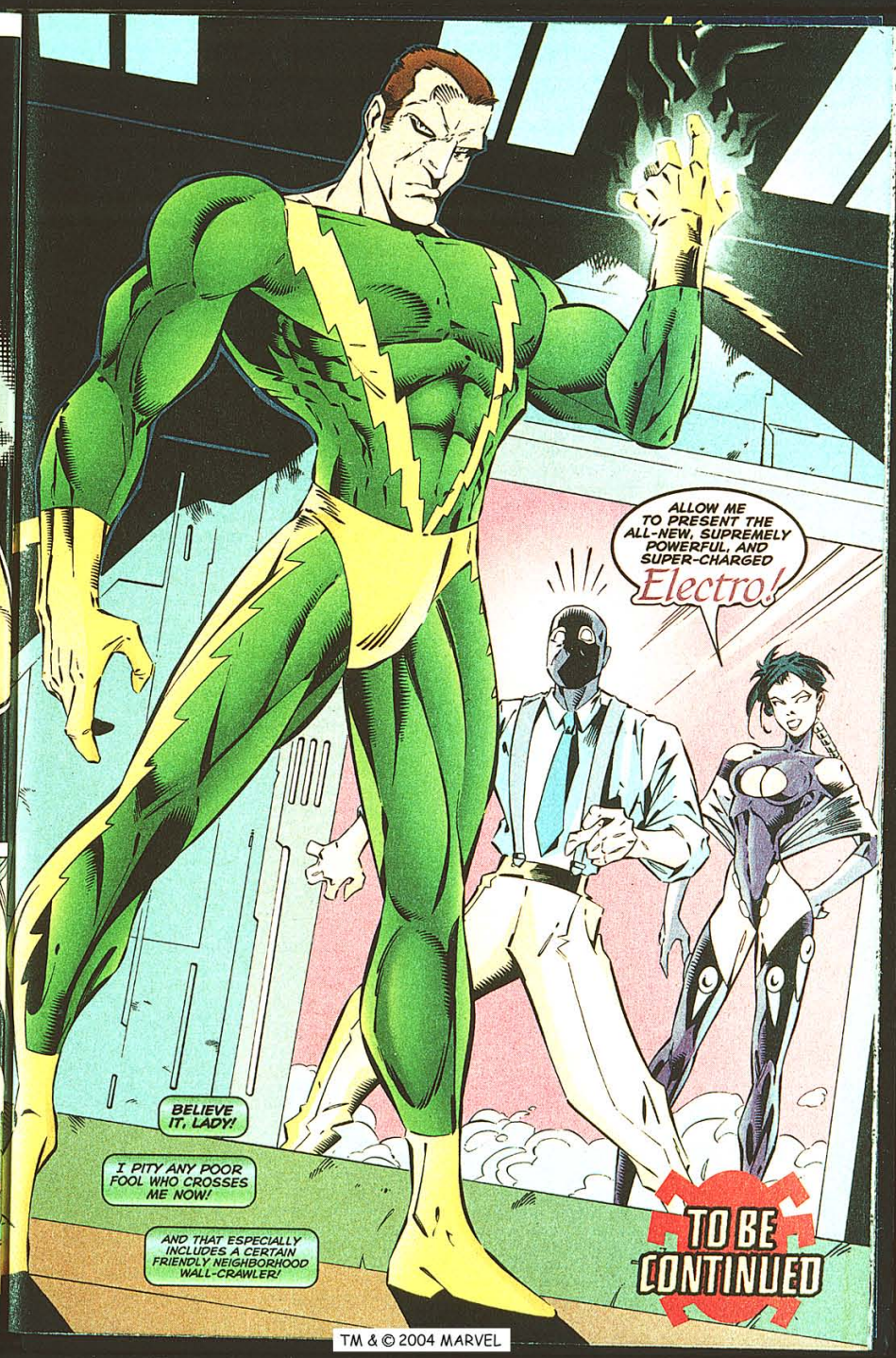
ALLOW ME TO PRESENT THE ALL-NEW, SUPREMELY POWERFUL, AND SUPER-CHARGED Electro!
BELIEVE IT, LADY!
I PITY ANY POOR FOOL WHO CROSSES ME NOW!
AND THAT ESPECIALLY INCLUDES A CERTAIN FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD WALL-CRAWLER!
TO BE CONTINUED
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THE SPIDER'S WEB

Dear Spider's Web,

RE: AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #417:

Thanks for one of the greatest issues in months of my all-time favorite comic book!

The very innovating story and seeing Judas Traveller, Scrier(s), Chakra, etc. back gave me the same *great* feeling I got during the start of the Clone Saga, before revealing that Peter is *supposed* to be the clone…

The Clone Saga is coming to an end, and I bet my life on it, it will be "amazing!" Right? And Peter will be back as our hero! Right? The fact that Peter could place a spider-tracer on Ben without Ben noticing it is yet another example of the fact that there can only be *one, true Spider-Man,* and his name is Peter Parker!

Seeing so many Scriers was very strange and unexpected, but interesting nevertheless! I wonder who the mastermind behind all this will be! And…did Gaunt actually kill (a) Scrier at the ending? So many questions, so little answers…it's driving me insane!!

I would also like to say that Ron Garney did a decent job, but he couldn't make *me* forget Mark Bagley, but I bet he could to other readers because *he is good!*

Finally, I agree with Travis: *Bring back Stunner!* C'mon, you other readers out there—support our "Bring back Stunner" campaign!!

Oh…and bring back Bagley!

Anton van de Gloar
Langelaar 15
3905 W.L. Veenendaal
THE NETHERLANDS

OK, since Anton raised the question, we might as well see how many Stunner fans there are out there. Let's hear it, folks—who wants to see the world's hottest virtual reality construct spring back into these pages?

Sorry to hear that our serpentine plot threads are messin' with yer noodle there, Anton. Yes, Gaunt did do away with the Scrier that happened to be doing business with him at the time, but as we now know, he's barely scratched the surface of this ancient, mysterious order. They certainly seem to have far-reaching influence, though. Who knows when they may pop up again?

Dear Spider's Web,

On the issue of the Clone Saga, I love it, others hate it, but the difference is that people have feelings about it which makes it all the better. A storyline that no one cares to comment on is no storyline at all, which makes this the pinnacle of the Spidey Saga. Enough on that.

On to pencilers. Mark Bagley's pencils were a thing to behold, clear, concise, cartoony, and crisp. Mr. Bagley will go down in my history books as the best Spidey penciler ever. Sure, there was McFarlane, and there was Larsen, who were great artists, even possibly industry-changers, but neither suited Spidey like Bagley. By the way, Ron Garney was pretty good himself.

On to AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #417. Whoa! The Rose is quite a planner. Using someone else's alter ego is the best way to throw off competition and protect the man inside. Judas Traveller is a mutant? What a surprise (isn't everyone at Marvel nowadays?). Gaunt is probably Norman Osborn and his employer is the Kingpin (Kingpin might have scooped up Norman after Green Goblin I bit it way back when), but this is purely my speculation.

Now to Spidey himself. The man is resilient. Every issue he finds himself facing adversity, defeats it, and moves on without the slightest remorse and that's why Ben Reilly has allowed my heart to substitute him for Peter Parker as Spidey.

One thing bothers me, though. Being a probable minimum-wager, how does he afford an apartment and web fluid costs?

A few questions to finish out:

1) How quickly do you plan to have M.J. lose weight after childbirth?

2) Where is Ron Garney popping up next? And how about Mark Bagley?

3) Does the Rhino make good money at being a henchman idiot who always gets his sorry butt kicked?

4) When will one of the villains (classic, preferably) finally win one over Spidey and take off to the Caribbean and have a long, much enjoyed vacation? (Please let it be the Beetle).

Ed Collett
745 Hailey St.
Coquitlam, B.C.
CANADA U3J 4PL

You were pretty close with your guess, Ed, but as we all know now, Gaunt was really Mendel Stromm, the devious Robot Master, who was indeed employed by good ol' Norman Osborn. Good try, though!

As for your questions:

1) We didn't plan anything, Ed. The lovely M.J. took off all that excess weight herself in the month-long interlude between PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN #75 and SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #242.

2) As of last month, the talented Mr. Garney began his regular stint as regular penciler on SILVER SURFER! And boy, does it rock! If Ron's unique take on the spacefaring Norrin Radd hasn't jumped off the racks at you already, pick it up—you won't be disappointed. And as for Mr. Bagley, we've plugged his upcoming monthly series THUNDERBOLTS so often in these pages already, we're almost embarrassed to do it again. You must have seen the promo art that's been making tsunami-sized waves throughout fandom by now, Ed! And issue #1 is on sale in just 30 days. Who-hoo!

3) Uh…no. That's why he has to keep going out there and risking getting his butt kicked. See how it works, now?

4) Well, the Trapster just gave the still-a-little-rusty Peter quite a pasting (tee-hee) over in the pages of SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, Ed. We're not quite sure if he headed off to the tropics or not, but we kind of doubt it. He seemed very intent on re-establishing himself as a major league baddie. No rest for the wicked! As for the Beetle, if you keep a close eye out, you'll see that he will be receiving major, prolonged exposure in one of our ongoing titles *very* soon. But we're not gonna tell you which one! Aah-hah-hah-ha!

Dear Spiderites,

It is August 22. Trees and other assorted foliage are in full bloom. The air is heavy with humidity. The heat index has risen to over 100 degrees.

And it feels like Christmas!

Why? Because of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN '96. I can hardly believe my eyes. I feel like a teenager again. All of my old friends are back. Captain Stacy. Gwen. Harry. Norman. Kraven. And most important of all…John Romita, Sr.!!!

I can't tell you what a thrill it is to see this mega-talented superstar's artwork once again. I've missed you, John. You are the best!

To everyone involved with this very special issue, my deepest appreciation and most humble thanks.

Dan Haupert
1470 Kent Lane
Elgin, IL 60120

Hey, if you thought it was fun to see John Sr.'s artwork again, Dan, imagine how much fun it was for us to work with him again! We take any opportunity to work with Jazzy John that we can, and now that he's retired from being our full-time behind-the-scenes Art Director, we're just plain tickled that he's found the time to work on the occasional project with us. Glad you enjoyed it.

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RALPH MACCHIO, Editor
JOE ANDREANI, Assistant Editor

Correspondents: If you don't want your full address printed, please let us know.

Dear Spider's Web,

Seeing Captain Stacy and Gwen back was the best thing you could have done for me! It made me feel all warm and fuzzy, having the classic characterizations back. Captain Stacy knowing and accepting Peter's dangerous secret, Gwen Stacy being her old self, and putting it in the 1996 Annual. Knowing where it was all ultimately heading to, well, I must confess that I shed a tear or two over this story!

The Mary Jane story was very good, too, and very frisky and suggestive at times! I'm like Peter: Mary Jane is the "big one," but we'll never stop honoring the place that Gwen Stacy (and even her dad) had in these spider tales!

Bryan Leed
100 E. Nottingham Rd. Apt. B
Dayton, OH 45405-1641

Indeed we won't, Bryan, as this story showed. Spider-Man has one of the richest single histories of any character in the industry and we take great pride in being the overseers of it. And trust us, we get as much enjoyment as you in revisiting those fabled days of yore, and if you don't believe us, then just take a stroll over to where UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN is racked. If you're not catching this mega-cheap (99¢!) gem, well, then we're just going to have to take your Merry Marvel Marching Society membership card away!

Dear Amazing Ones,

When I learned that AMAZING SPIDER-MAN '96 would contain a story from the days when Peter Parker and Gwen Stacy were an item, I knew it would be good. But I didn't know it would be *this* good. "Heart and Soul" was easily the best story I've read this *decade!* It actually read and looked like a tale that was produced in the late sixties!

Ron Frenz was the perfect choice to pencil this yarn; I loved his work on this title in the mid-eighties (it had a certain "Ditkoesque" quality, while maintaining his own unique style). To have his art inked by the legendary John "Ring-a-Ding" Romita, Sr., a classic artist from that era, made it an even bigger visual delight. And what can I say about Tom DeFalco's script? If I didn't know better, I'd think that Smilin' Stan Lee had written it! This team captured the style and flavor of that time period in a way I had not thought possible.

Oftentimes when a story like this is done, it doesn't fit neatly into the established continuity. This was not the case here. Everything was on target—from Kraven the Hunter's attempt to settle the score with Norman Osborn (a plot thread that was never satisfactorily tied up until now) to Captain Stacy's discovery of Peter's secret identity (I always wondered how that happened). The characterization was great as well. Gwen Stacy has always been my favorite character, and the essence of her relationship with Peter was captured beautifully. It was the highlight of the issue for me! I still think that Ben Reilly should get together with Gwen's clone—after all, this tale clearly established that the original Gwen was the greatest love of his life. Maybe lightning could strike twice.

Everything about this story was perfect. Oh, sure, there was an occasional "modern" word or two, and the artwork never bled off the page in the old days, but this didn't hamper my enjoyment one bit. I'm glad this issue was printed on newsprint, rather than the glossy stock—not only did it keep the price down, but it added to the nostalgic feel of "Heart and Soul" as well.

So, Norman Osborn was funding Professor Warren's research, eh? Could it be that Warren made a clone of him after Osborn died? And could this clone be Gaunt's mysterious employer? And could Gaunt be…the Jackal?

I also enjoyed the second story, but not as much as the first one. How come it didn't have a title? The reference to Gwen's death was nice to see—it gave the entire issue an underlying theme.

All in all, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN '96 was an incredibly good book. Thanks for giving me an opportunity to travel back in time to an earlier, simpler day. I really enjoyed the trip!

Bob Mitchell
1730C N. Arlington Place
Milwaukee, WI 53202-1619

Thanks for checking in, Bob! And what a nice, detailed critique of our humble Annual. As we mention above, this work was a labor of love, and it was truly as much fun for us as it was for you. Any time we can deliver you a satisfying story (or two!) at a price that's right, we consider it a job well done. And when we manage to assemble a stable of talent as storied as the crew which put together AMAZING '96, well, we consider ourselves just plain lucky.

Dear Spider's Web,

I'm writing this letter from halfway around the world, in good ol' equatorial Malaysia. Yes, you've got some die-hard fans here, too. Anyway, I'm one of Webs' biggest fans and I've been that way for many years now, considering the fact that I'm only 16. I've got the biggest Spider-Man collection this side of town (and I'm proud of it). I'm such a big fan that Spidey sometimes swings in to say "Hi" in my dreams!

I'm writing this letter to congratulate all you web-heads (I mean it in a good way) on all the great work you have done. And I know I don't speak just for myself. Your work just keeps getting better and better and I should say that AMAZING SPIDER-MAN is simply Marvelous, and there's no comic as good as it this side of the universe.

After seeing all three of Spider-Man's costumes together in this year's Annual, namely Spidey's traditional blue and red costume, the black costume (I kinda like this costume) and his new one (which looks awesome), two questions popped up in my head which are driving me up the wall (Spider-Man would be proud). First, does Spidey's new costume have a belt light and Spider-Signal like the old days? Considering the fact that his new costume doesn't seem to have a belt. And number two, about Spider-Man's tracers—does he still have them? And if he does, what do they look like? I mean, he doesn't have the tracer-shape symbol on his back anymore like he did on his old costume.

Well, that's all from here for now. Continue being Marvelous and until next time, make Mine Marvel.

Navin Freddy
MALAYSIA

Thanks for the kind words, Navin. Wow, first the Netherlands, and now Malaysia. Is Spider-Man an international phenomenon, or what?

As for your questions, yes, the Ben Reilly Spider-Man did indeed employ the Spider-Signal, even though the new costume seemed to be sans belt. Actually, the old costume didn't have a belt either; the design of that form-fitting spandex just made it look that way. On the topic of the Spider-Tracer, Ben just plumb didn't have the time to redesign those suckers to conform to his new costume. Let's face it, between scraping together a living at a coffee shop and fighting supervillains in his spare time, he had his hands full. Do you think you would have time to fully accessorize?

DESIGN BY COMICRAFT

NEXT ISSUE:

Electro's powered up like never before, and Spidey better watch out, because ol' lightning head is gunning for the web-slinger! And that's not all, becuse in this ish we start dropping some so not-so-subtle hints about the return of major, *dead* Spider-Man villain! Plus: Is Mary Jane flirting—with another man? Look for it in a mere 28 days, by Tom DeFalco, Joe Bennet and Bud LaRosa!

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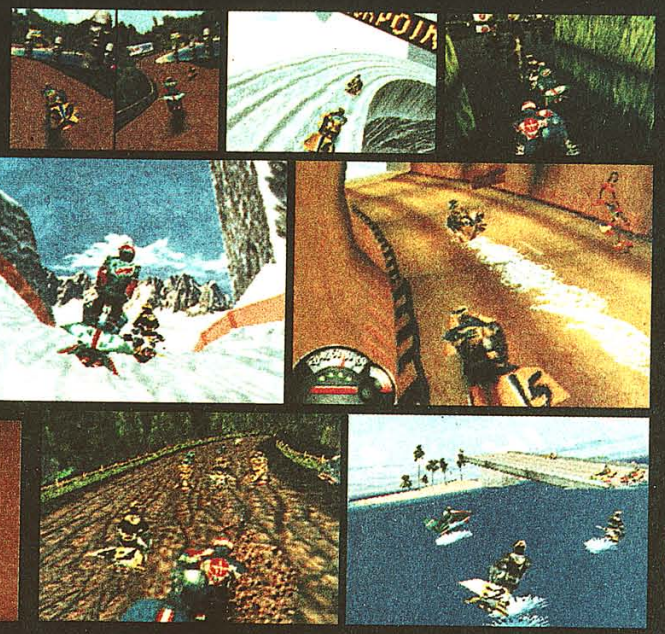

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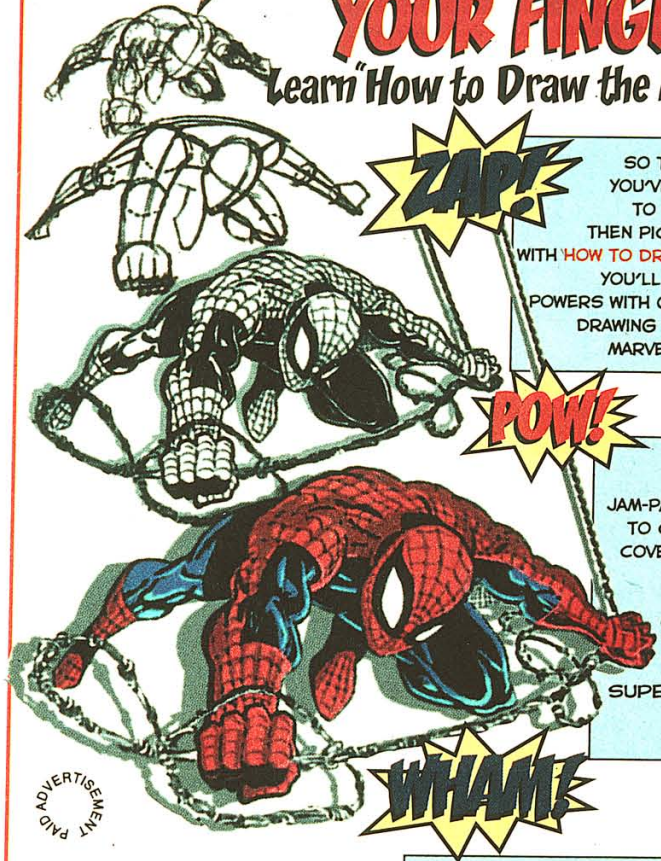

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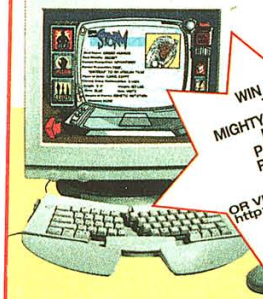

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